

# Harford County Commission on Disabilities

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## Meeting Minutes March 28, 2011

### Attendance:

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Associate Members Present:
Susan Austin	Amy Axel	
Niki Biggs	Councilman Guthrie	
Bob Coen	Laurie Kwiedorowicz	
Helene Dubay	Steve Sopel	
Reverend Ellison		
Keith England		
Kathy Halliday		
Mike Mathias		
Ben Mayforth		
Tracy Moore		
Marc Weinstein		
Andrea Wiley		

- I. Chairperson Marc Weinstein called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
- II. Presentations:
  - A. IMAGE Center: Mike Bullis, Executive Director of the new center for independent living serving Baltimore City, and Baltimore and Harford Counties, discussed the philosophy of the independent living center movement and the services to be provided by and for adults with disabilities, including transitioning youth.
  - B. "Money Follows the Person": Trisha Curran of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene discussed this program, which provides funding and support for individuals with disabilities, who are currently living in nursing homes or other institutional settings, but would like to live in the community.
- III. Minutes: The minutes of the January 24, 2011 meeting were approved as presented.
- IV. Committee Reports:

- A. Membership: The Commission unanimously approved the following recommendations which will be forwarded to the County Executive for approval:
1. Reappoint the following members:
    - Marc J. Weinstein in the category of “Family Member of an Individual with a Disability”.
    - Laurie A. Kwiedorowicz and Andrea L. Wiley, in the category of “County Citizens with an interest in assisting individuals with disabilities.”
    - Kathleen M. Halliday and Susan F. Austin, in the category of “Individuals Representing Agencies Serving People with Disabilities”.
  2. Reappoint Marc J. Weinstein and Reverend Alvin Q. Ellison as Chair and Vice Chair respectively.
- B. Accessibility Committee:
1. Housing: The Commission will co-sponsor Fair Housing Month training on Saturday, April 16, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. until noon at the Bel Air Branch of the Harford County Public Library. Other co-sponsors are the Harford County Human Relations Commission, the Harford County Housing Agency, and Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. The Commission Chairperson will make welcoming remarks, along with the Vice Chair of the Human Relations Commission and the Director of the Harford County Housing Agency, at this free event. To register, visit the Commission’s web page at <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/disabilities> .
  2. Accessible County Facilities: No new information.
  3. Request for Waiver of the MD Accessibility Code: No new requests for waiver have been received.
  4. Ramps Program: Sharon Grzanka reported that one ramp had been constructed since last report. More information to follow.
  5. Operation Access: Reverend Ellison reported that he will contact Sheriff Bane about repeating the “Accessible Parking Campaign” sometime this year. He also reported that Baltimore City had raised the fine for illegal parking in accessible parking spaces and that Channels 13 and 45 had run special series on the subject.
- C. Education Committee: Helene Dubay reported that the Expo for Transitioning Youth will be held on Saturday, March 17, 2012, from 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at the New Life Center of the

Mountain Christian Church in Joppa. The next Expo Planning Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. at the historic “Bel Air Colored High School”, 205 Hays Street, Bel Air.

- D. Government and Community Relations Committee
  - 1. Web page: The IMAGE Center is the “spotlighted” agency on the Commission’s web page.
  - 2. Legislative Committee: Chairperson Laurie Kwiedorowicz’s first review of disability-related legislation before the Maryland General Assembly was distributed and is attached.
  - 3. Voice of the Disability Community:
    - Maryland Alliance of Local Commissions and Committees on Disabilities: no new information.
    - Maryland Youth Leadership Forum: cancelled for summer 2011.
    - Jurisdictional Planning Group: no new information.
- E. Employment Committee: Niki Biggs reported that the annual Employment Awards Luncheon will be held on Thursday, October 20, 2011, at noon at the Maryland Golf and Country Clubs. The next meeting of the Employment Committee will be held on Thursday, April 21, 2011, at 1:30 p.m. at the Aberdeen Workforce Center, 34 Philadelphia Road in Aberdeen.
- F. Transportation Committee:
  - 1. Sharon Grzanka reported that Harford Transit Night will be held at the Western Ho-Down Dance on Friday, April 15, 2011, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the McFaul Center, Bel Air. Attendees will have the opportunity to board a Harford Transit Link bus, meet the driver, and learn about services, as well as pick up applications.
  - 2. The next meeting of the Transportation Committee will be held on Friday, May 13, 2011, at 1:00 p.m. at the historic “Bel Air Colored High School”.
- V. Disabilities Coordinator Report: Sharon provided an update on the advocacy work of Pete Raimondi, a Harford County resident who has attended Commission meetings in the past. Pete has approached local restaurants about providing guest chairs with arms for individuals who need the extra support to sit and stand. To date, more than 14 restaurants have provided chairs with arms in response to Pete’s request.

VI. Old Business:

- A. Fair Housing Month training. See III. B. above.
- B. Commission Annual Picnic: Reverend Ellison brought up the picnic for member consideration. Date and location to be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

VII. New Business:

- A. 2011 Art without Boundaries Exhibit, Student Gallery, Joppa Hall, Harford Community College. The Commission voted to cancel the July 25, 2011 meeting so that members could attend the exhibit reception in honor of the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 2011. Members who know artists with or without disabilities who would like to participate are referred to Natalie Weeks, Coordinator, Harford County Cultural Arts Board at 410-638-3527.
- B. Autism and Related Disorders Expo, Saturday, April 30, 2011, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the Aberdeen Area Recreation Center, Aberdeen Proving Ground. Sharon is seeking a Commissioner to assist at the Commission's information table.
- C. FY 2012 Annual Action Plan for Community Development: Staff of the Community Development Division, Department of Community Services had planned to take public comment on the plan at the Commission's August 22, 2011 meeting. This may be cancelled due to change in submission date. More information to follow.

VIII. Public Comment and Announcements:

- A. The Community Resource Fair for families with children with special needs will be held on Friday, April 1, 2011, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at Bel Air High School, 100 Heighe Street, Bel Air. Fifty-seven exhibitors have registered to attend.
- B. April is Autism Awareness Month.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

2011 Legislative Review  
As of 28 Mar 11<sup>1</sup>

HB 58/ SB 202: Community Services Reimbursement Rate Commission-extension of termination date. Proposes to extend the date of termination from 30 September 2011 to 30 September 2016. The Senate proposal was approved and a hearing in the House is scheduled for 29 March.

HB 104: Higher Education-Community Colleges; Tuition Waiver for Disabled Individuals. Amends the current law to allow residents, who left the workforce due to a total and permanent disability, to an exemption from tuition if they are taking 6-12 credits a semester. The individuals must be enrolled in a degree or certificate program designed to lead them to employment. The proposal was approved in the House.

HB 285/SB 642: Human Relations - Discrimination by a Place of Public Accommodation - Enforcement and Remedies. Expands the remedies available for discrimination by a place of public accommodation; clarifies the remedies available for an unlawful employment practice; and authorizes a complainant alleging discrimination by a place of public accommodation to bring a civil action; etc. Both proposals passed.

HB 437: Real Property- Sales of New Homes and Minimum Visitability Features. This proposal requires developers of new home subdivisions, with 11 homes or more, and 3 or more model homes, to make one of those model homes available with minimum visitability features as dictated by the proposal. The proposal was passed in the House.

HB 452/ SB 702: Health Insurance - Coverage of Hearing Aids. Requires an insurer, nonprofit health service plan, or health maintenance organization that provides coverage for hearing aids to an insured or enrolled individual who is not a minor child and that places a dollar limit on the hearing aid benefit, to allow the individual to choose a hearing aid that is priced higher than the benefit payable under the policy or contract and pay the difference between the price of the hearing aid and the dollar limit on the benefit; etc. Both proposals passed.

HB 621: Fire Safety- High Rise Buildings- Mobility Impaired Individuals. This proposal (failed last year) requires a high-rise owner to provide reasonable written notice to mobility-impaired individuals regarding their

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<sup>1</sup> Note that proposals showing no activity since the first week of March 2011 have been removed from this report.

right to request a unit on the first five floors if one becomes available. The proposal was approved in the House and is now in the Senate.

HB 685: Education - Bullying Safety Risks and Health Problems. Requires the State Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, to provide specified information to county boards of education relating to specified safety risks and health problems regarding “bullying”; and requires specified schools to send specified information on the safety and health risks related to bullying to specified parents and guardians; etc. The proposal passed in the House and is now in the Senate.

HB 730: Task Force to Study Access of Individuals with Mental Illness to Regulated Firearms. This proposal creates a task force to look at altering specific provisions relating to regulated firearms dealer's licenses, the application for a permit to possess and the possession of regulated firearms, and the sale, rental, or transfer of regulated firearms to limit specified permits, transactions, and the possession of a firearm if a person has been treated within the previous 5 years for a mental disorder described in a specified version of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - Mental Disorders". Passed in the House and is now in the Senate.

HB 840: Children, Youth and Families- Services to Children with Special Needs. This proposal changes the state policy to add more emphasis on locally managed care through core service agencies. The proposal modifies the existing policy to provide access to necessary services that are the least restrictive and appropriate, in the most effective environment possible. Appears to be an interagency approach to family-driven, home and community based continuum of care. Passed in the House and is now in the Senate.

HB 849: Public Safety Smoke Detectors and Smoke Alarms. This proposal dictates that people can only sell or install alarms or detectors for individuals with hearing impairments in accordance with the State Fire Prevention Code. Passed in the House and is now in the Senate.

SB 12/ HB 1223: Maryland Quiet Vehicles and Pedestrian Safety Task Force- Reconstitution. Re-establishes the task force, prohibits members from receiving compensation (but not reimbursement), and requires the task force to make findings and recommendations regarding the minimum sound levels and sound characteristics to be required for all new vehicles

sold and registered in the state. This proposal might meet resistance from vehicle manufacturers and dealers who may be unable to comply with the recommendations or might not want to fund further add-ons to their vehicles. Both proposals have passed.

SB 167: Public Institutions of Higher Education - Tuition Rates – Exemptions. Extends the period within which an honorably discharged veteran must present evidence to qualify for a resident tuition rate; establishing that specified individuals, including undocumented immigrants, shall be exempt from paying the out-of-state tuition rate at public institutions of higher education under specified circumstances; requiring specified individuals to provide documentation regarding Maryland income tax withholding; etc. Passed in the Senate and is now in the House.

SB 188: Recreational Fishing Licenses-Exemption for Disabled Armed Forces Members. Service members, with service-connected disabilities, may fish in Maryland without obtaining a license or applicable stamp. The only requirement is that service members possess a valid military ID. Passed in the Senate and is now in the House.

SB 406: Task Force to Study the Use of Telemedicine in Medically Underserved Populations and Areas. Establishes a Task Force to Study the Use of Telemedicine in Medically Underserved Populations and Areas; provides for the membership and staffing of the Task Force; specifies the duties of the Task Force; requires the Task Force to make a specified report to the Governor and specifies committees of the General Assembly on or before September 30, 2012; terminating the Act on September 30, 2012; etc. Proposal received favorable review in the Senate.

SB 489/ HB 38: Nonpublic Schools That Participate in State Programs - Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation – Policies. Requires nonpublic schools that accept State funds to adopt by March 31, 2012, a policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, and intimidation; requires the policy to include specified provisions; encourages nonpublic schools to develop the policy in consultation with specified groups; encourages nonpublic schools to publicize the policy in a specified manner; provides specified employees who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation are not civilly liable under specified circumstances; etc. Both proposals passed.

SB 682/ HB 793: Behavioral Health - Veterans - Coordination and Provision of Services. Reenacts specified provisions of law that were abrogated as of May 31, 2011, to provide for the continuance of the coordination of

specified behavioral health services for specified veterans; requires the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in consultation with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, the Maryland National Guard, and the Maryland Defense Force, to provide behavioral health services coordination for specified veterans, subject to specified limitations; etc. Both proposals have passed.

SB 763: Hunting Licenses: Exemption for Disabled Armed Forces Members. This proposal expands the existing exemptions for hunting without a license, on private property, to service members with disabilities, as long as those individuals are carrying valid military identification. The proposal passed in the Senate.

SB 830: Extending the Date for Tax Credits for Employment of Qualifying Individuals with Disabilities. This proposal extends the date for taking qualifying tax credits for an additional year (2012 or 2015), depending on the state law. The proposal passed in the Senate.

SB 994: Sales and Use Tax - Alcoholic Beverages. Increases the rate of the sales and use tax imposed on the sale of an alcoholic beverage from 6% to 7% for fiscal year 2012, to 8% for fiscal year 2013, and to 9% for each fiscal year thereafter; requiring the Comptroller to distribute the revenue from the rate increase to the General Fund of the State; etc. A hearing was held on 23 March. Note that the status of this bill is getting a lot of publicity from special interest groups and the media, but it is not identical to the Lorraine Sheehan Health and Community Services Act of 2011. This proposal does not earmark any percentage of the sales tax revenue for any purpose- contrary to reports made by media and special interest groups.

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